

Backstage

A SPECIAL NEWSLETTER – FOR SUBSCRIBERS ONLY

Nothing's quiet on the Amiga front



This month editor Steve Jarratt has swanned off on holiday to Greece. But before he went he had time to write a few words especially for AF's subscribers....

Welcome to another secret meeting of the *Amiga Format* subscribers' club, and welcome to another *Backstage*. Curiously, things have been quiet since the last *Backstage*. Curiously, no-one has started, no-one has left, and we're all sitting where we were last month.

But there are a few changes to *Backstage* this issue, including a new competition slot, and some behind-the-scenes gamesy news from Steve Bradley.

FES

As you should know by now, it's not too long before this year's Future Entertainment Show. I know we keep banging on about it but it will be your best chance to see the Amiga in action, meet the *Amiga Format* team and pick up a bargain or two.

The whole Amiga world will be represented by companies from the US and Europe, all keen to show off their Amiga stuff. And star of the show will be the Amiga

Theatre, where you'll be able to meet and speak to myself, Nick Veitch, Jason Holborn, Stephen Bradley and Richard Baguley and Graeme Sandiford from *Amiga Shopper*.

Already we've got a brilliant line-up of presentations on *Music-X*, *Lighthouse*, *Imagine*, desktop video, CD-ROM and desktop publishing. We've got the guys from Sensible Software and Core coming down to show off their latest games and every day we'll be showing off the best Amiga programs from our readers – see our news pages (and our free disk labels) this issue for more details.

We also need questions to ask the team: if you have a burning problem – whether it be technical, gamesy or just plain weird – send it in to us. That way we'll have a good stock of questions if the crowd go shy, and if you're there, we'll get you to ask them in person.

Send all your tricky posers to: FES Question Time, *Amiga Format*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.

AMIGA GAMES

No-one said that games programmers are ideologically sound. Check out this 'tip' from Steve Abbott of Colchester. While fooling around with Gremlin's footie management sim, *Premier Manager 2* he discovered that upon dialling the telephone number 0898 69, you get through to the club secretary – who just happens to be a buxom blonde – and if you click the right mouse button over certain parts of her body, she lets forth a hellish

Continued overleaf →

WHAT I DO

Sue Grant
Deputy Editor



Sue Grant – a week last Friday.

I've worked in the publishing industry since I was 19, at which age I tied up my few belongings in a red spotted hanky and went off to seek my fortune in the gold-paved streets of London.

My first job in The Smoke was on a very small magazine where I did everything from paste-up and typesetting to writing a record review page.

I then worked on a couple of other trade mags until I took a job on *New Woman* as their Production Editor – I did everything from checking advertisement film and chasing copy to print buying.

From *New Woman* I moved on to *Me* magazine, again as their Production Editor. As *Me* is a weekly title life was incredibly hectic – we had deadlines every single week and there was no way we could miss any of them. And we were working on around 18 issues at a time, some being planned and others being laid out and subbed.

Continued overleaf →

AMIGA FORMAT

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Take advantage of our exclusive-to-subscribers offer of two videos for the special price of £19.95 (normal price £29.98). Additional videos cost just £9.99 each. Check out our range of *Amiga Format* videos on page 82 of this month's issue, then send in the coupon you'll find over the page.

After 11 years in London I decided to have a much-needed change of air (fresh would have been nice) and a more restful lifestyle. And so I applied for a job at Future Publishing on a brand new launch, *Super Play*. Hurrah!

Little did I know that even though the air was fresher (just) the lifestyle was going to be just as hectic. We only had five weeks to produce the very first issue of *Super Play* - which we did on time!

There I was quite happy being the Prod Ed on *Super Play* and knocking the rest of the team about, when I was asked if I would like to be Deputy Editor of *Amiga Format*. I jumped at the chance. But my knees were shaking as I walked into the office on my first day...

You see nobody at Future had ever dared to enter the hallowed and rather intimidating office of *Amiga Format* before (because Marcus and Tim looked so scary).

But, luckily, Steve Jarrett had taken over as Editor and I had my trusty boxing gloves, which seemed to convince the *Amiga Format* team that I meant business.

And I discovered that they're a soft lot after all. Friday afternoon is sing-a-long-a Glen Campbell time (oh dear), and as Frank put on The James Taylor Quartet's theme to *Starkey And Hutch* and roared about the floor and over desks shooting everyone with an imaginary gun, I realised that life wasn't going to be too bad after all...

as Red Dwarf meister Chris Barrie and Roger Blake who provides many of the voices for top satirical show *Spitting Image*.

CD32 OFFER

CD32 owners will be glad to hear that a second issue of the *Amiga CD32* magazine is well under way. Sue Grant, *Amiga Format*'s Deputy Editor, is in charge.

All going well, the mag should go on sale on October 6 and will boast another cover-mounted CD chock full of goodies.

The mag costs £4.95 but, as a special offer to *AF* subscribers, you can get hold of it for just £3.95! After October 6, give our mail order hotline a call on 0225 822511 and be ready to quote a credit card number (Access or Visa). A shiny, brand new copy of *Amiga CD32* mag will be yours.

LIGHTWAVE COMPO!

Since I've taken over *AF*, I've noticed that we don't do enough for our loyal reading subscribers. So, in an effort to redress the balance, I thought we'd start doing some special competitions that only you can win.

To begin with, I'm going to be giving away a copy of *Lightwave*. Yes indeed, you can win the same program used to generate the visual effects in *Babylon 5*! Now, I reckon you've got to be a real 3D-head to want a copy, so here's the twist: I want you to render

◆ squeal. Not that we've checked this, of course. Oh no.

Psygnosis' follow up to the pretty, if rather vacant, *Microcosm* has been shelved indefinitely. *Nova Storm* (formerly known as *Scavenger 4*) is already out in Japan on Fujitsu's FM-Towns machine and is due for release on the Mega CD in a matter of weeks. We can but hope that the project gets off the ground again in the near future.

MicroProse and Digital Integration are hitting the budget games trail in September and their joint brand will be called Power Plus, with prices of games set at £16.99. MicroProse will produce the games while Digital Integration (who also market the Action 16 range) will actually sell them. Expect greats such as *Gunsight 2000* and *Formula One Grand Prix* to start with.

Simon The Sorcerer is receiving the 'lengthy animated intro sequence' treatment for its forthcoming CD32 outing, along with a soundtrack provided by major celebrities such

Write to Backstage

If there's anything you would like to see in *Backstage* or *Amiga Format*, write to:

**Backstage,
Amiga Format,
30 Monmouth Street,
Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.**

the *Amiga Format* office. You're all subscribers; you should all have *Imagine*. So there's no problem is there?

I don't really care what 3D program you use, but whatever it is you've got to model what you think the *Amiga Format* office looks like. Obviously the room is full of desks, chairs, computers and people. There's also a fax, phones, a laserwriter, and tons of mags, posters, shelves and general office junk.

Most of those models are available on PD, although you're welcome to model them yourself. Once you've decided what our office is like (points may be given for use of unusual lighting, mysterious effects and humour), send your entry on disk to: *Backstage AF Office* Compo, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

To give you enough time to get it sorted, your entries don't have to be in until Friday October 21. The best ones will be on display at the FES show, where the winning entry will be chosen - so you'd better be there!

A special invitation from the editor

Come to the FES for FREE!

Because you're a valued *AF* subscriber, we don't want you to miss out on this year's Future Entertainment Show. It's going to be the best ever, because everything in it has been designed especially to help you get the best from your *Amiga*. At the heart of the show will be a theatre dedicated to the *Amiga*, where you can meet the *AF* crew, key developers and industry figures.

We'll be looking at everything from virtual reality and the Internet to multimedia and CD-ROM and covering everyday

computing problems. If you get five friends to come to the show with you and book all six tickets in advance at the discount rate of £6 (tickets on the door are £7), we'll send you your ticket free!*

Call our Ticket Hotline 0369 4235, or fill in the coupon and send a cheque for £30 payable to The Future Entertainment Show.

Yes, I want to take up this brilliant offer.
Please rush me five tickets, plus my free ticket.

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Subscriber Superdisk

Issue 64 • October 1994

We take care of our subscribers. And, just to show you how much we care, here's Jason Holborn with another disk full of programs for your pleasure.

ON THIS MONTH'S DISK...

Mine Runner - Anyone remember the arcade classic *Lode Runner*? Relive those days with this brilliant PD incarnation.

* **PowerData** - You've heard of PowerPacker, now meet PowerData, a utility that doubles the storage capacity of any storage device.

* **FileX** - Need to edit a binary file? Then you need FileX!

Dial Codes - Find out the location of any standard BT dialling code with this handy little utility.

* **Tiny Clock** - Keep track of time without

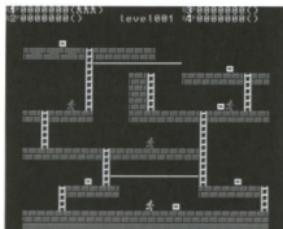
clogging up your Workbench with *Tiny Clock*, a... tiny clock.

Imagine Object - Explore the universe with a little help from this Star Trek 3D object and a copy of our *Imagine* Coverdisk.

CG Fonts - Improve the presentation of your word processing and DTP documents with these CompuGraphic outline fonts.

OctaMED Tune - You've got to move it, move it with this sonically superb *OctaMED* tune. Everyone in the house say yeah!

* Requires Workbench 2 or above.



Stick men go bonkers in this brilliant incarnation of the classic arcade hit *Lode Runner*. Ah, those were the days...

MINE RUNNER

I remember the days when a computer's memory was measured in kilobytes and the average game took weeks to load from tape...

One game that was responsible for wasting a sizeable chunk of my youth was Broderbund's brilliant *Lode Runner*, one of the first and still one of the best platform games to be released on a home micro. Although *Lode Runner* looked pretty dire, it had that one vital ingredient - playability. Heaps of the stuff.

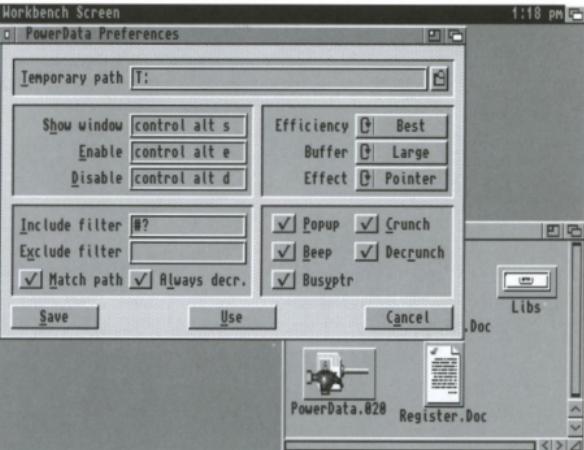
Mine Runner is an Amiga version of *Lode Runner*, but whereas most programmers would have been tempted to update the classic formula Matthias Bock has left well alone, making *Mine Runner* possibly the most faithful version of *Lode Runner* since the original BBC Micro version.

The aim of the game is to guide a little spy (that's the white stick man) through screen upon screen of platform action picking up gold bars as you go. To make life a little more challenging, each screen is filled with enemy agents (the little blue stick men) all of whom

are hell bent on your destruction. If things get too tight pressing the fire button destroys the section of platform immediately in front of you, which can either be used as a quick escape route or as a trap for a pursuer.

POWERDATA

Although there are a number of compression systems, such as LHA, ZIP, ZOO, and ARC, which are designed to optimise the storage capacities of hard disks and floppy drives, they all have one problem - once a file (or group of files) has been compressed, they must be



Double the capacity of your hard drive or floppy disks using PowerData.

GETTING STARTED

You can access the programs and files on this month's Subscribers' Superdisk by inserting a copy of the Workbench disk into the internal drive of your Amiga and then switching on. Once Workbench has loaded, replace it with your Subscribers' Superdisk and a disk icon appears labelled SUBDISK. Before you attempt to use any of the programs on the Superdisk, make a back-up of the disk using the procedure detailed in the Coverdisk pages in this month's issue of *Amiga Format*. Once you've made a back-up, store the original in a safe place and run all the programs from your copy.

decompressed by the program that compressed them in order for the Amiga to understand them.

PD author Michael Berg has tried to get around this with *PowerData*, a powerful file compressor/decompressor that invisibly packs and unpacks any file as and when it's needed. Once installed, any program can read and write compressed files - *DPaint*, for example, loads packed pictures and saves them in the same format without even realising it.

What all this adds up to is a huge decrease in the amount of disk space that your favourite programs and data files eat up - most files are packed to about 50 per cent of their original size, allowing you to store approximately 1.6Mb of data on an 880k disk.

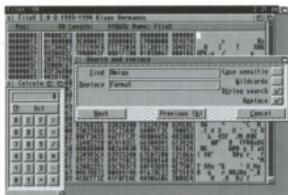
Before you can use *PowerData*, two library files must be installed on to your Workbench disk. Load up the Workbench, enter the Amiga Shell (CLI) and enter the following command at the Shell prompt.

Copy SUBDISK:POWERDATA/LIBS/#? LIBS:

FILEX

If there's a particular task you need to perform on your Amiga, the chances are that there is an editor program available that will do the job for you - if you want to edit text,

Continued overleaf ➔



FileX is a powerful binary file editor that offers a huge range of editing options.

→ for example, you can use a text editor and if you want to edit binary files you can use *FileX* – a binary editor.

I know, I know – being able to edit binary files doesn't sound like the most interesting thing you can do with your Amiga but you'd be surprised at just how useful it can be. Take, for example, that old PD program that doesn't open up a full 640x256 pixel window on your Workbench (the author was American and so he only wrote the program to run on an NTSC Amiga). What do you do? You edit it with *FileX*, that's what!

Binary file editors are nothing new on the Amiga but *FileX* is definitely the best of them. To load the program, simply double click on its icon and the program loads into memory. Because this is the unregistered Shareware version, *FileX* displays a requester prompting you to register for what seems like an eternity – simply sit and twiddle your thumbs for a bit and the program will eventually load.

DIAL CODES

Do you know where in Britain the telephone code 0373 would get you? The smart Alecs among you will know that it's the code for a quaint little town called Frome about 12 miles from Bath, but the rest of us need *Dial Codes*.

Using *Dial Codes* is easy. Once it's loaded, click on the string gadget (the long rectangle immediately right of the label Code/Place) and enter a dialling code. If *Dial Codes*

CG FONTS

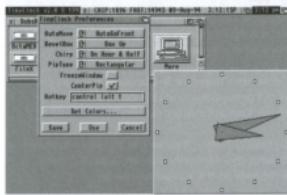
We have not one, but two CompuGraphic outline fonts for use with your favourite DTP, word processing or paint programs. The fonts are called *Eras* and *Aachen*.

To install the both fonts, boot from your normal Workbench system disks and follow these steps:

- 1 Run the Fountain (or Intellifont if you have an A1200 or an A4000) program in

Eras UltraBlack Aachen Bold

Add class to your DTP and word processing documents with these two lovely outline fonts.



Not only is *Tiny Clock* prettier than Commodore's effort but it's also a lot more configurable.

recognises the code it tells you which area of Britain it covers. *Dial Codes* is handy when you need to find out a dialling code too – simply type in a place name instead of a dialling code and the program tells you the code required.

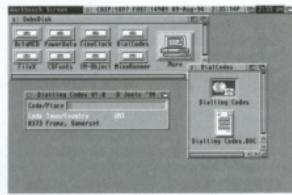
TINY CLOCK

OK, OK, I know that Workbench already has a clock utility but, take it from me, it's nowhere near as good as *Tiny Clock*. Not only is *Tiny Clock* a great deal prettier than Commodore's effort, but it's also a lot more configurable. If, for example, you don't like the colour of any part of the clock you can change it.

your System directory and insert the Subscribers' Superdisk in any drive.

- 2 Click on the gadget at the top right of the screen under Outline Font Source and select SUBDISK from the list of volumes. Click on CGFonts drawer and click on OK. The two fonts on the Superdisk should then be shown in the Source Typefaces list.

- 3 Click once on both fonts (an 's' symbol appears next to them) and then click on Install Marked Typefaces. After a bit of disk swapping, the two fonts are installed onto your Workbench disk. You may find that there is not enough free space on your Workbench and so some files may have to be removed (don't forget to only work on a back-up of your Workbench disk).



Find out the location of any British or International telephone dialling code with our Subscribers' Superdisk utility *Dial Codes*.

Unlike Commodore's clock, *Tiny Clock* remembers all your settings too – for example, if you move it down to the bottom left-hand corner of your Workbench and scale it down so that it is only 20x20 pixels in size, *Tiny Clock* saves these settings to a preferences file which automatically loads in each time you run the program.

IMAGINE OBJECT

Space, the final frontier. These are the voyages of the Starship Subscribers' Superdisk, her mission – to bring *Amiga Format* readers a 3D object for use in our super *Imagine* Coverdisk ray-tracing program.

As this rather dodgy intro paragraph suggests, this month's 3D object is none other than the Starship Enterprise, from the *Star Trek* TV series (and a painful number of *Star Trek* films).

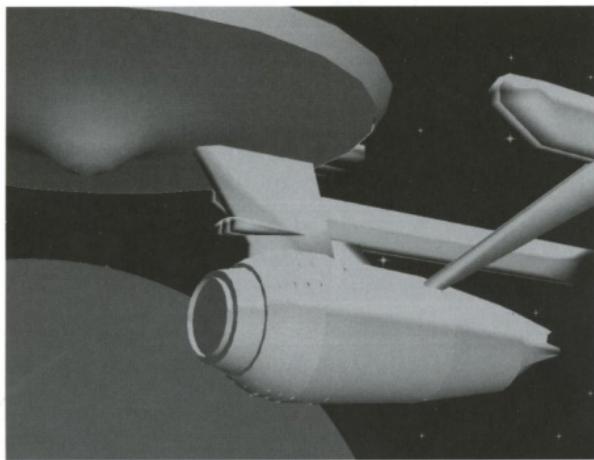
OCTAMED TUNE

Swing your pants with this month's Subscribers' Superdisk *OctaMED* tune, *Epitaxial.MOD*, a jolly little ditty that will have you strutting your stuff like Michael Jackson on an excess of Lucozade.

Boot up your Amiga from our *OctaMED* 5.0 Coverdisk, select Load Song from the *OctaMED* Project menu and then select this tune from the *OctaMED* drawer on your Subscribers Superdisk.

If you have any suggestions, comments or programs that you would like to see on the Subscribers' Superdisk, please write to:

Jason Holborn,
Amiga Format Subscribers' Superdisk,
Future Publishing,
30 Monmouth Street,
Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.



Venture into a rendered universe inside your Amiga with this month's *Imagine* 3D object, the Enterprise.